





BCINTERIOR FESTIVAL **DRUG CHECKING**

Drug checking results from Bass Coast and Shambhala festivals in British Columbia, Canada.



DRUGCHECKING.CA/2024-FESTIVAL-INFOGRAPHIC

000 Total festival attendees









What is drug checking?

Drug checking is a free harm reduction based service that enables people to know what is in their drugs.



The service user is welcomed in an anonymous and inclusive space. They are informed of the drug checking process and its limitations.



Substance composition is analyzed using specialized technology. A combination of FTIR spectroscopy, testing strips and reagents is used.



Results are discussed with non-judgemental experts. Access to a variety of other harm reduction related services is available.



The service user is empowered in making an informed and potentially safer choice regarding their use of substances.

Important Note!

The following results do not represent overall drug use at festivals. They are based solely on findings from the drugs that voluntarily come through the drug checking service.

Alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and magic mushrooms are not analyzed by drug checking services, so this report does not look into their prevalence and composition.



ALL OTHER DRUGS IDENTIFIED BY NUMBER OF OCCURENCES

WHAT DO DRUGS LOOK LIKE?

DRUGS, WHAT ARE THEY REALLY?

Keeping to the 6 most common drugs analyzed, we break down what the drug was expected to be and what it actually was.

1.2% 3.9% 5.6% 4.2% 9.6% 2.7% 2.9%

The expected susbtance was not detected and the sample

ACTIVE OR INACTIVE ?

ACTIVE ingredients are substances that have a noticeable

Drugs acquired at the festival were **4.4%** more likely to test as expected.

WHERE DRUGS COME FROM AND SERVICE ACCESS

At festivals, the origin of the drug influences if someone is more likely to access on-site drug checking before using.

When the drug was acquired **on-site**, **88.9%** checked their drug at the festival before using.

When the drug was acquired off-site, 63.6% checked their drug at the festival before using.

INCREASE IN DRUG CHECKING ACCESS IF THE DRUG IS ACQUIRED AT THE FESTIVAL

Off-Site: Drug acquired outside of the festival

People who acquired their drug on-site were 40% more likely to test their drug at the festival prior to using, compared to those who got their drug off-site.

DISCLAIMER

FTIR Spectroscopy (Fourier Transform Infrared) uses light absorption to determine the composition of a drug. This technology is quick, non-destructive and relatively accurate. However, it is not able to accurately detect any substances that are in a proportion of less than 5%. It cannot accurately measure the quantity (amount) of each component in a sample. The results listed in this report take into consideration the limitations of technologies used. The results obtained by the drug checking services used for this report may be missing important information regarding the composition of substances.

Testing strips for potent drugs like fentanyl and benzodiazepines are used with the FTIR to circumvent some of these limitations, but may leave some substancesndetected.

LSD was tested using **Ehrlich reagent**. This method can tell if there is a high likelihood, but not certainty, of having LSD or other indole containing molecules present. It does not inform about other substances potentially co-occurring in the sample.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the contribution of the many partners and collaborators that make drug checking and harm reduction possible at festivals.

Thank you to AAWARE, ANKORS, ASK Wellness, Bass Coast Festival, BCCSU, Blood Ties, Elixir, Fraser Health, GRIP, Interior Health, Mountain Side Harm Reduction Society, POUNDS Project, Shambhala Music Festival.

Thank you to all attendees who waited patiently in line and donated, your contribution made this possible.

Above all, thanks to all the volunteers. We wish to note that festival drug checking is a mostly volunteer effort. With Bass Coast and Shambhala together, over 80 people come from all over Canada to participate in providing drug checking services.

> Infographic by Antoine Marcheterre, Interior Health Drug Checking Lead Data processing by Leanne Cusack, Epidemologist and Antoine Marcheterre Data management by Mia Pohl and Jen Angelucci - BCCSU

when the drug was unknown.

UNKNOWN DRUGS?

On many occasions, users accessing the service have "unknown" drugs. This can happen because the drug was found on the ground, gifted to them without explanation or obtained from the bottom of a tickle trunk in grandma's attic. Sometimes, people forget to label their bags and many drugs look the same. Drug checking is a safer option than "trying just a little bit!"

Were brought to the drug checking service as **UNKNOWN.** (11.3%)

For more information, and to find drug checking in your community, visit:

drugchecking.ca

